

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

I. Status of the Claims

Claim 109 is currently pending, with claims 110–204 withdrawn from consideration as directed to a non-elected invention. In the Office Action mailed September 10, 2004, claim 109 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over U.S. Pat. No. 5,593,130 to *Hansson et al.* (“*Hansson*”). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection, and the election of species requirement, is respectfully requested in light of the following remarks.

II. Claim Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102

As noted above, claim 109 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over *Hansson*. This rejection is respectfully traversed because *Hansson* does not describe, or suggest, every element found in the claim.

Claim 109 recites “bonding a bottom surface of the second elastomeric layer onto a top surface of the first elastomeric layer” and this element is neither described nor suggested in *Hansson*. While the reference shows a first elastomeric layer 2 above a second elastomeric layer, there is nothing to indicate that the two layers are bonded to each other. In fact, the only embodiment described in *Hansson* shows the two layers being held in place by an upper support plate 1, and a lower support plate 4. This shows that the first and second elastomeric layers in *Hansson* are pressed together by the support plates, and not bonded together like the elastomeric layers of the present invention.

For at least this reason claim 109 is allowable over *Hansson*, and withdrawal of the rejection of the claim under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over the reference is respectfully requested. In light of the allowability of generic claim 109, rejoinder of the species claims that were withdrawn by the election of species requirement is also requested. This includes claims 110–

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122, and 124-189 all of which, directly or indirectly, depend from claim 109, and are therefore in the form required by 37 C.F.R. § 1.141(a).

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe pending claim 109, and withdrawn claims 110-122, and 124-189 are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

No fees are believed to be required with this Response. Should, however, any fees be required, please charge Deposit Account No. 24-1430 for any fee deficiency.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 303-571-4000.

Respectfully submitted,



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